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Subject: FY 2005 Making Tracks Awards Recipients

To: Regional Foresters, Station Directors, Area Director, IITF Director and Deputy Chiefs

I am pleased to announce our selections for the Forest Service ***Making Tracks Awards*** for fiscal year 2005. National Forest System Deputy Chief Joel Holtrop and the National Wild Turkey Federation's Director of Agency Programs, Robert Abernethy, presented these awards on February 23, 2006, during the National Wild Turkey Federation's Leadership Lunch and Meeting held in conjunction with their 30th Annual Convention and Sports Show in Nashville, Tennessee.

The ***Making Tracks Awards*** are presented annually in four categories to current or past Forest Service (FS) volunteers and employees in recognition of people and their outstanding achievements in conservation education, expanding partnerships, and projects that incorporate active wild turkey management into ecosystem management projects that have significant habitat improvement benefits for the wild turkey. Concurrent recognition of National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF) volunteers and their local and state chapters is appropriate and encouraged in all categories. Projects must also help accomplish the mission of the NWTF and the FS. These awards are presented annually by the NWTF and the FS at the Annual Convention of the NWTF, in the presence of hundreds of members that lead the NWTF's volunteer efforts across the country. This year's awards were presented to the following outstanding individuals:

The **Habitat Management Projects Award** was presented to the Clifton Ranger District, Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest, in recognition of their outstanding work to utilize innovative partnerships with the Arizona Chapter of the NWTF and others to improve wild turkey habitat in the Mesa Unit of the Sheep Wash Ecosystem Restoration Project. The **Habitat Management Programs Award** was presented to the Monongehela National Forest in recognition of many years of program accomplishments that improve or enhance wild turkey habitat on the forest through partnerships with the West Virginia Chapter of the NWTF and the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources. Since 1985, they have cooperated to improve habitat for all wildlife on over 100,000 acres of the forest. The **Conservation Education Award** was presented to the Talladega Ranger District, Talladega National Forest; the Cheaha Chapter of the NWTF; and NWTF volunteer, Johnny Ponder. This partnership has resulted in a comprehensive effort to provide all of the school age children in Talladega County, Alabama, with a quality experience of forest and wildlife conservation education. The **Partnership Achievement Award** was presented to the Wayne National Forest and the Ironton Ranger District for their outstanding partnership achievements at the Lake Vesuvius Wheelin' Sportsmen Fishing event. The Ohio Division of Wildlife, the South Hills Longbeards Chapter of the NWTF, and Howie Damron, national spokesman for NWTF's Wheelin' Sportsmen program, were also recognized for their outstanding contributions.



The collaboration, dedication, commitment, and accomplishments of these award recipients have contributed significantly to the conservation of native plant and animal communities on public lands. Their efforts exemplify the Forest Service commitment to our mission of sustaining healthy, diverse, and productive national forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations. Congratulations to the award recipients for a job well done. They are all certainly worthy of being recognized as conservation leaders and I would like to join the rest of the Forest Service in expressing pride for the important work that they do.

Thank you for your continued support of this valuable partnership.

/s/ Frederick Norbury (for)

JOEL D. HOLTROP

Deputy Chief for National Forest System

cc: Robert Abernethy NWTF